

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action dated September 12, 2006, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 11 and 22 are amended and claim 29 is canceled. Claims 1-17 and 22-25 are now pending in this application.

§112 Rejection of the Claims

Claim 29 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant has cancelled claim 29.

§102/§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 11, 13-15, 17, 22-24 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Fogarty et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,690,648), alone or in view of Thomason et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,485).

Claims 11, 13-15, and 17

Applicant has amended claim 11 to better describe the subject matter recited in the claim. Applicant believes claim 11 is not anticipated or obvious over the cited references since, even if combined, the combination does not include each limitation recited in the claim. For instance, Applicant cannot find in the asserted combination: an elongated tube including a lubricant-coated internal surface, as recited in claim 11.

Claims 13-15 and 17 include each limitation of their parent claim and are therefore also not anticipated or obvious in view of the cited references. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-24

Applicant has amended claim 22 to better describe the subject matter recited in the claim. Applicant believes claim 22 is not anticipated or obvious over the cited references since, even if combined, the combination does not include each limitation recited in the claim. For instance,

Applicant cannot find in the asserted combination: the elongated hollow tube including a lubricant-coated internal surface, as recited in claim 22.

Claims 23-24 include each limitation of their parent claim and are therefore also not anticipated or obvious in view of the cited references. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fogarty et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,690,648) in view of Thomason et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,485). Claim 12 includes all the limitations of its parent claim and is not obvious over the cited references since the secondary reference does not overcome the deficiencies of the primary references discussed above. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 16 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fogarty et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,690,648) alone or in view of Thomason et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,485) and further in view of Fleischhacker (U.S. Patent No. 4,596,559). Claim 16 and 25 include all the limitations of their respective parent claims and are not obvious over the cited references since the secondary reference does not overcome the deficiencies of the primary references discussed above. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 1-10.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 359-3267 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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By their Representatives,

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12/12/06

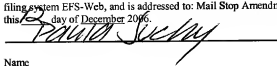
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 12 day of December 2006.

Name



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